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August 31, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: U [ ]  
FROM: S/P - Lampton Berry  
SUBJECT: Albania

I understand that the PSB at its meeting on August 26 concurred in your opinion that the question of a covert operation in Albania be put on ice for the time being. While the time is not now ripe for an actual operation, there may be political and other preparations that we can begin to make at this time which might put us in a position to act expeditiously and decisively at such time as a covert operation may become feasible and desirable. In other words, we should prepare ourselves for eventualities in order that everything will not have to be done at the last minute should a favorable opportunity present itself. I accordingly think that the PSB (or OCB) should establish an interdepartmental task group to explore this problem thoroughly and to recommend to the PSB (or OCB) actions which can be taken now by the appropriate Departments and Agencies short of actual commitment to an operation. This task group should initially be composed of representatives of Defense, CIA, and State (EE-Thurston, S/P-Berry).

It is Mr. Bowie's view, which I share, that diplomatic approaches to Great Britain and other powers will have to be timed very carefully in the light of the many other troublesome problems which are currently burdening our relations with them.

Recommendation:

That you propose to the PSB the establishment of an interdepartmental task group with the terms of reference indicated above. It should make its recommendations to the PSB (or OCB) within 30 days and should make progress reports periodically thereafter as appropriate.

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